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WASHINGTON

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The expulsion, defection or transfer of 147 Soviet countries around the globe during 1983 has clearly put agency on the defensive, U.S. officials said Monday.

Aside from their KGB losses, they said, the Soviets suffered serious resistance and more forceful reactions by governments to infiltration attempts. The officials also said Soviet agents face other problems around the world, notably in Afghanistan and Cambodia.

At the same time, they said, U.S. intelligence has been increasing manpower to counter some 50 major, identifiable terrorist groups worldwide, many of them under Soviet control or operating with Moscow's tacit approval.

The officials requested that their names, and the names of the government agencies for which they work, be withheld.

They said the administration is moving toward a concerted international effort to combat terrorism and likened the approach to international efforts to halt piracy during the 16th and 17th centuries.

The sources said the CIA's Directorate of Operations, which supervises agents abroad and clandestine operations, has been built up to strength following a cutback made under Stansfield Turner during the Carter administration.

Turner was succeeded as CIA director by William Casey, a former chief of the World War II Office of Strategic Services that preceded the CIA, and former presidential campaign manager for Ronald Reagan.

Turner was said to have been intrigued by technical gathering of intelligence. He cut back heavily on headquarters experts and analysts and relied heavily on machinery.

Casey, however, is known to prefer people to machines for close-in intelligence gathering and assessment.

There is every sign Casey intends to stay on as chief of all U.S. intelligence agencies and continue his present policies if Reagan is re-elected.

At the State Department, a spokesman confirmed that U.S. officials held two days of meetings last week with officials from the "summit seven" countries to discuss "our continuing joint efforts on protection of diplomatic personnel" from terrorists.

The State Department said the president will soon announce a legislative package that will outline the American role in cooperative measures to combat terrorism.

The seven nations who meet annually at the economic summits are: Britain, Canada, France, Japan, Germany, Italy and the United States.

On other matters, the officials disputed published charges that the administration is "covering up" alleged Soviet complicity in the 1981 attempt to assassinate Pope John Paul II.

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